



ahead.[®]

A MANUAL TO GET A FLYING START

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Welcome to the Ahead tutorial

Learn the basic concepts needed to get a flying start with Ahead. Create cool presentations, galleries, portfolios, web sites. It's only your imagination that sets the limits.

Before you get started it's nice to get an understanding of how Ahead works compared to traditional web publishing and creative authoring tools.

You only work in your browser (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari, Opera).I.e. there's no software to download or install (apart from Flashplayer)

All of your content and spaces lie on Ahead's servers and can be accessed from any computer (this also means that the content is only accessible when you're online)

All spaces have their own unique URL, which makes it very easy to share and publish your spaces to everyone on the web.

1. Sign Up

Sign up on www.ahead.com

2. Login

You can login on www.ahead.com or the bottom left corner of most Ahead powered spaces.



When logging in, beware that you may be in View mode and the "Go Edit" button is inactivated because you don't have access to the specific space that you've logged in from (eg. www.ahead.com). Click on "Spaces" to open one of your own spaces. Click on "Files" to create a new space.

3. Get Content into Your Space

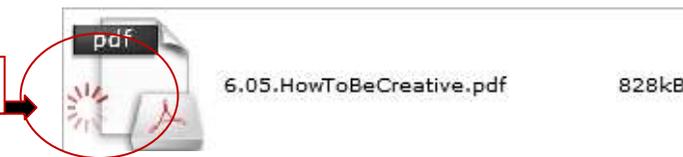
1. Click INSERT in the tool palette, and the My Media list opens.
2. Click the Upload button (green circle) in the My Media list to upload your own images, videos etc.
3. Before Ahead can display your uploaded files in your space the servers need to process them. This typically goes pretty quickly, but depending on server load and file sizes it may take up to 30 minutes (especially for huge multi-page PDFs and PSDs).
4. The files are ready to be inserted in your space when the red spinner (see below) on top of the file icon shown in your media list disappears.

The Tool Palette



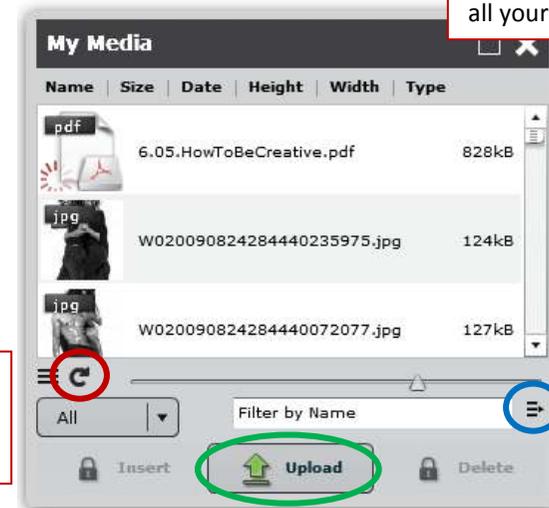
My Media List
Your central library from where you can insert your content to all your spaces.

Red Spinner



5. Select one or more files in My Media and drag them directly on to your space (alternatively click the Insert button).
6. Now you can start to layout your space as if you were working in any other layout tool.
7. For more advanced Insert options like replace click the button marked with the blue circle.

Use the **refresh button** (red circle) in the My Media list if the uploaded media seem to process too long.



4. How to Navigate

When you work in **Edit Mode** you Zoom and Pan in your space like this:

PAN = Space Key + Mouse Click + Drag

ZOOM = 'Mouse Wheel' or 'Page Up/Down keys', or 'Ctr & -/+'

... or use the **Navigator** (to the right)



5. How to Save your Space

Click on **FILE** and click Save or press Ctrl+S. Click 'Save as' to create a copy of your space.



6. VIEW/EDIT Mode (Preview)

Preview and test your space by clicking the yellow **GO VIEW** button in the top menu.

It's also in GO VIEW you can test the links you create in your space. Click **GO EDIT** to go back to the editing interface.



7. Advanced Layout Options

Ahead offers some pretty advanced layout options like **layers, groups, alignment, creating links** etc, which are invaluable to most users who want to create cool interactive designs. Click the blue **Open Advanced Menu** button to access these options.

Space Settings

Space Name	Blank Space	Autoplay	No	Pause	5 seconds	Navigator	Yes	Tween Style	Linear easeln	More>>
		Loop	No	Tween	1 second	Space Access	Public	Background Color	#FFFFFF	

A space has several options that you can set. The space options appear when no items are selected in your space. Click on an empty area of your space and the main space settings show.

1: Change your space's name

2a-2e: Settings 2a-2e are all related to Scenes.

2a: Set **Autoplay** to On and your **scenes** will automatically start playing as a slide show when the space loads. Autoplay automatically pause when the user starts interacting with the space, and Autoplay resumes when the space has been inactivate for a while. This makes it perfect for kiosk solutions in receptions, tradeshowes etc.

2b: Set **Loop** to 'On' combined with Autoplay set to On and the slideshow automatically restarts when it ends. This is perfect if you use your space as a presentation or info screen used in stores, exhibitions, receptions etc.

2c: **Pause** sets how many seconds you want each scene to show before jumping on to the next scene

2d: **Tween** sets how many seconds it takes to move from one scene to the next. Set it to '0' and it will look like a traditional Powerpoint slide show where you can't see the presentation is laid out on one big surface.

2e: Here you can choose different **Tween styles**, that define the motion that happens when jumping from one scene to the next. Some tween styles are better for long tweens while some are better for short tweens. Experiment to get the best result.

3: Turn On/Off the Navigator

If you don't want to show the navigator in your space, this is where you turn it off.



4: Space Access

Here you can make your space private or public. As default it's set as public. For Free users this option is not available.

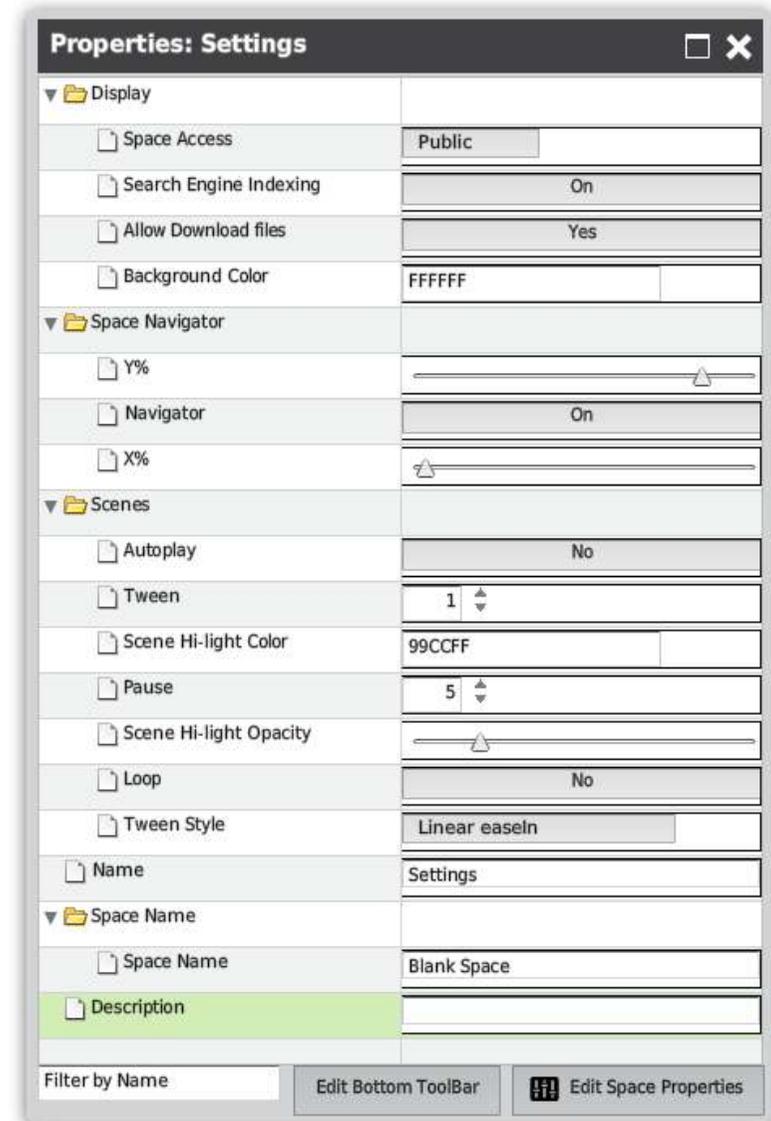
5: Background Color

Set the color of your space's background.

#6 More Settings

If you want to change more space settings you can click the **More>>** button.

A window then opens with all the possible space settings available.



8. Working with Layers

A space consists of three main layers in which you can place your content.

1. FRONT Layer

All items placed here lie on top of all items in the other layers. All content is fixed and non-zooming. Use the front layer to fix. place a permanent navigation menu and your logo

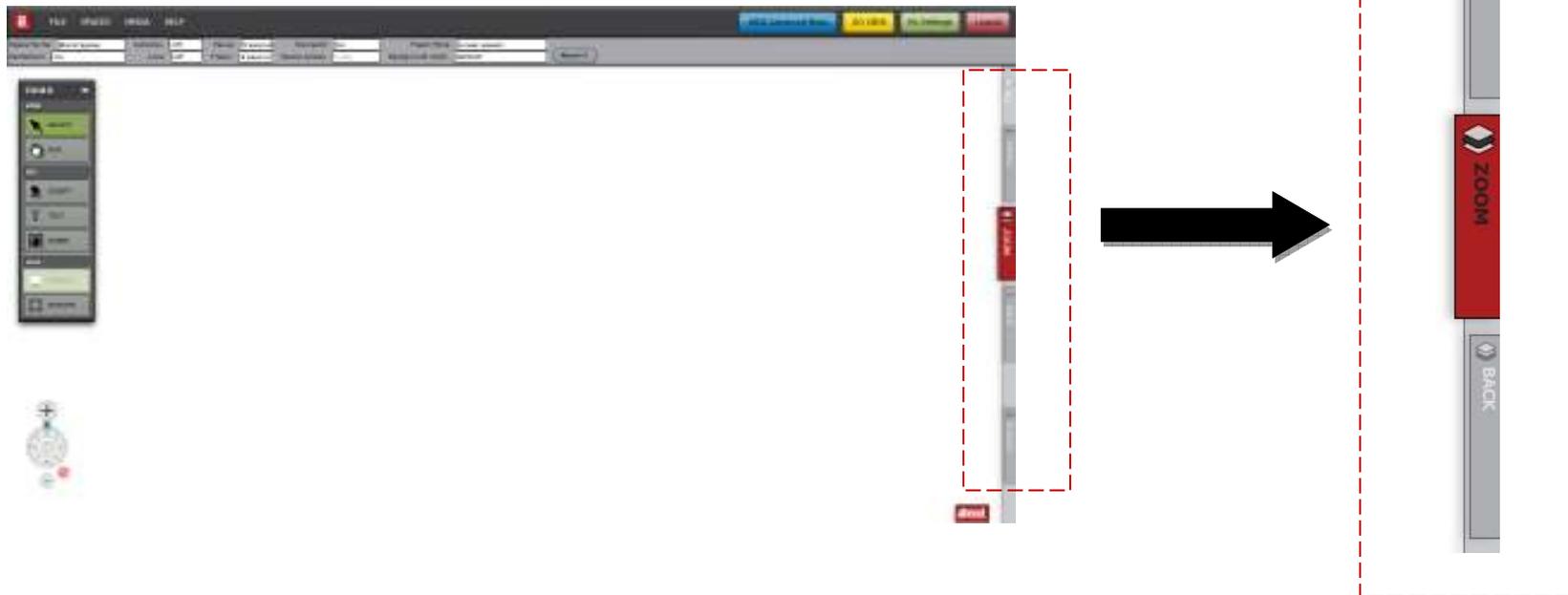
2. ZOOM Layer (MAIN)

The Zoom layer is the main content layer where you place your main content you want to present as zooming items.

3. BACK Layer

Is similar to the Front layer, where all items are fixed and non-zooming, but they are placed behind all the zooming content. Use the background layer to add a cool background image or video.

Click on these tabs to select which layer you want to work in. Click 'All' you will work in all the layers at the same time - including the Scenes.



How to work with Layers

#1 Open the Layers Lists
 Double Click a tab and you open a layers list, as you know from e.g. Photoshop, containing all the items in that layer.

Change the depth of each item by dragging it up/down inside the list.

Select an item in the layers list and it's also selected on the canvas.

Double click on an item in the layers list and you'll jump to it on the canvas.

Drag item from list onto Front Tab

#2

#1

#2 Move items from one Layer to the other
 Move items from one Layer to another by dragging the item(s) from the layers list onto a tab and release.

Example: If you want to move 'Image1' from the Zoom layer to the Front layer, drag the item from the Zoom list and onto the Front tab and release.

If you wait a bit before releasing the items, the Front layer list automatically opens, and you choose to drag the items directly into list.

Change Depth of Items

You don't have to use the layers lists to move items from Layer to Layer or change their depth.

When you select an item on the canvas and you have the Advanced Menu activated you can also use these up/down buttons (red arrows).

The screenshot shows the 'ahead.' software interface. At the top, there is a menu bar with 'a.', 'FILE', 'SPACES', 'MEDIA', and 'HELP'. Below the menu bar is a toolbar with several icons, including a hand, a plus sign, a trash can, a text 'T', an eye, a 'SHOW' button, and a crop icon. The main canvas displays two images: a woman in a bikini on a boat and two women in a city square with parrots. A top panel shows properties for 'Image 3', including X (-63.667), Y (-13.78), Height (36.5), Width (45.65), Opacity (1), Blend (normal), and Link (Scene). Three text boxes with red arrows point to the up/down buttons in the toolbar:

- Top box: Move selected item(s) one up/down within the same layer
- Middle box: Move selected item(s) from one layer to the other. (Eg. from Zoom layer to the Front layer).
- Right box: Bring selected item(s) from foreground to back (back to foreground) within the same layer. Short cuts: Ctr+Arrow Up, Ctr+Arrow Down

9. SCENES – make your space navigable

The concept of scenes is central for understanding how to make your space navigable and to make easy to jump from one area to another inside the space.

Create a Scene

1. Click the **Create Scene** Icon in the Tool Palette (see red circle to the right) to create a new scene.

2. Then click on the canvas and 'draw' your scene.

Alternatively double click the Create Scene button to create the scene as your exact current screen view.

Create New Scene



What is a Scene?

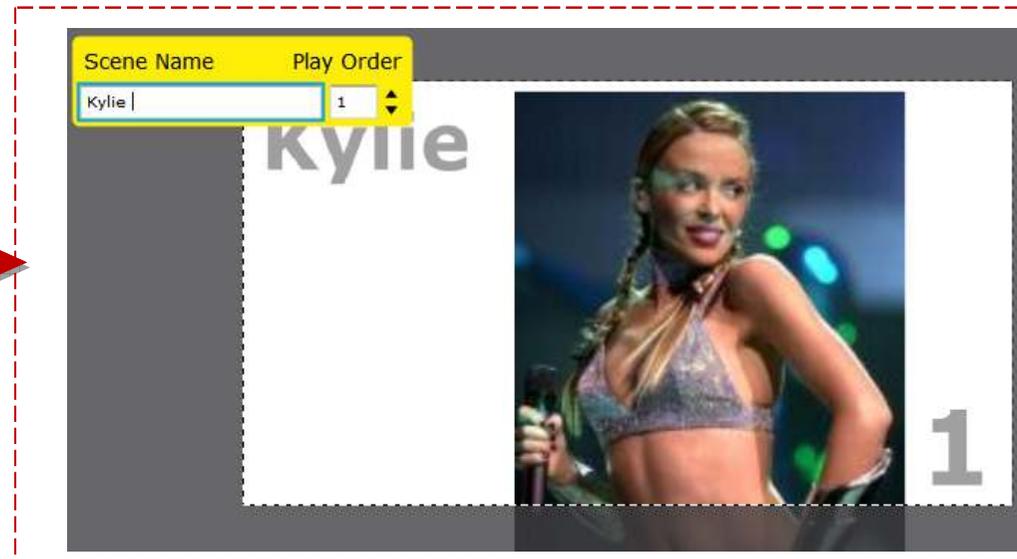
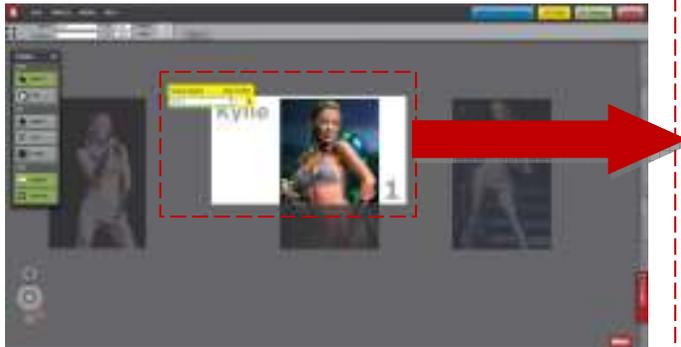
A Scene is a specific area of the Space that you define.

All content inside a scene will always be displayed when going to the scene (regardless of screen proportions)

A scene works like a bookmark or anchor point that you can link to.

Use scenes as slides in a presentation, or as pages on a web site.

3. Name your scene and hit Enter



4. Now create one more Scene and try to click the arrows at the bottom right hand corner (red circle to the right).

Now you'll experience that you jump from scene to scene (you can also use the keyboard Right/Left arrows, or ENTER).

This way you have created a slide show with 2 scenes (slides).

When jumping to a scene the user will see all the content placed within the scenes' boundary. Depending on the user's screen proportions (fx. wide screen vs 16:9) compared to yours, the user may actually see more than what's inside your defined scene.

5. Click on a scene on the canvas to move, resize and rotate it.

If you double click on the scene name or scene number in the corners of the scene you can edit the name and number.

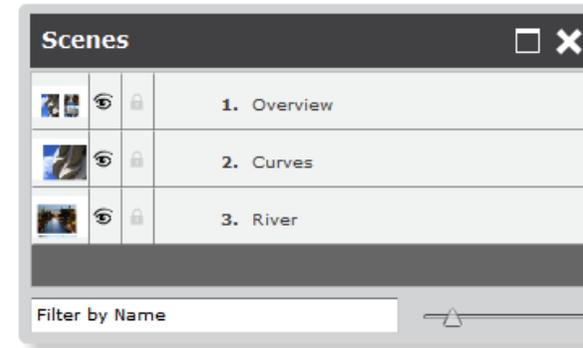
Next, First & Previous
Scene buttons



6. **Open the Scenes list by double clicking the red SCENES TAB.** The first scene is always the default view when the space loads.

Select and drag the scenes in the list up / down to change their play order.

Double click on a scene name and you'll jump to it inside the space.



Scenes are created in a sequential order like in traditional presentation tools like Powerpoint & Keynotes.

Double Click the red Scenes tab to open the Scenes list

7. **Hide the scenes** by using the F2-key (PCs only) or the **Show Scenes** button in the Tool Palette (red circle to the right). This makes it easier to layout your content without worrying about moving the scenes.

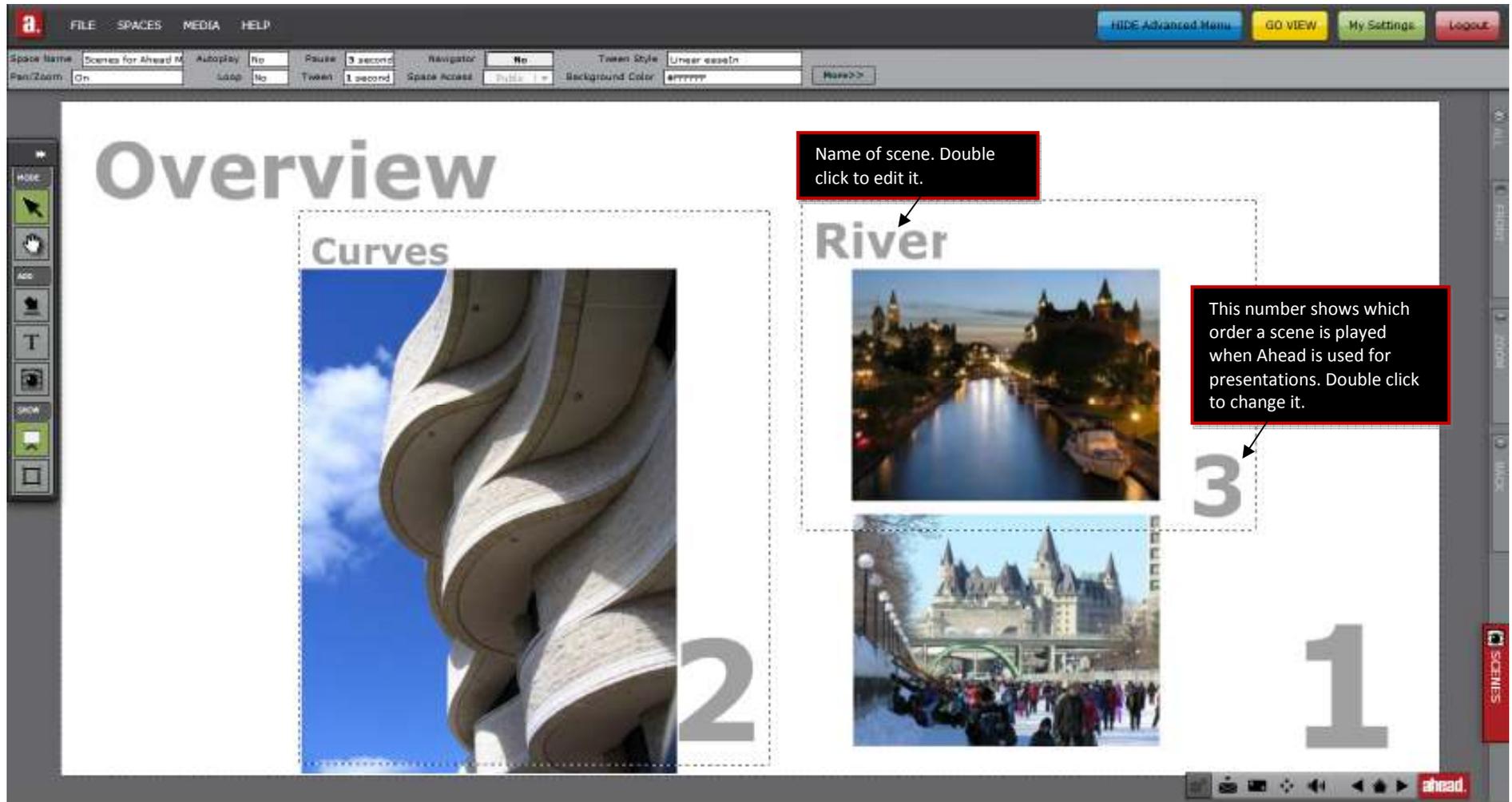
8. **Click the ZOOM TAB** to go back and work with your content.

9. **Click the SCENES TAB** to go back and edit your scenes.

Alternatively click the **ALL TAB** to move all items and scenes at the same time.



Hide/Show Scenes (F2)



EXAMPLE: This is a space with 3 scenes (outlined areas)

Scene 1: Overview

Scene 2: Curves

Scene 3: River

10. Links makes your space interactive

You can link to any scene, web site or space by creating **image** or **text links** placed in the Zoom and Front layer. When placed in the Front layer the links act like a fixed navigation menu, which will always be shown no matter how much you zoom and pan.

Create Image link

1. Select an image in your space
2. All properties related to that image now appears in the top tool bar (make sure to have the advanced menu open). Now find the **LINK** setting.

Link to a scene: Click on the empty field (red arrow). Then a drop down opens with all your scenes (this requires that you have already created a scene. If not go make a scene). Now select which scene to link to.

Link to a website: Click the **LINK** drop down (Scene is the default setting). A drop down list opens. Now select the HTTP (or HTTPS) option and insert the URL to the web site you want to link to (without http in front). Links will open in a new window.

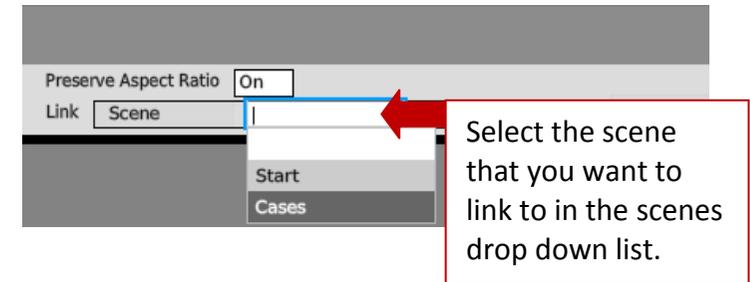
Link to another Ahead Space: Click the **LINK** drop down. A drop down list opens. Now select the Space option and insert the space's unique ID in the empty field. These links will not open in a new browser window but load in the same.

To link to a space only copy & paste the last part of the space's URL. See which part in these highlighted examples:

<http://ahead.com/azhOJQFDGr46nxqea17e6Z/caWtnwFDOr48Olqea17e6Z?scene=dad>
<http://ahead.com/giigamedia/supernova?scene=bandit>

If you want to link to a specific scene in that space, you can choose to add the scene name in the scene field (see example to the right).

<http://ahead.com/giigamedia/supernova?scene=home>



TIP
 Test the links by going into view mode by clicking **GO VIEW** in the top menu.



Link to email address: Same drill as above, just choose the email option instead.

3. Test the links by going into view mode by clicking **GO VIEW** in the top menu.

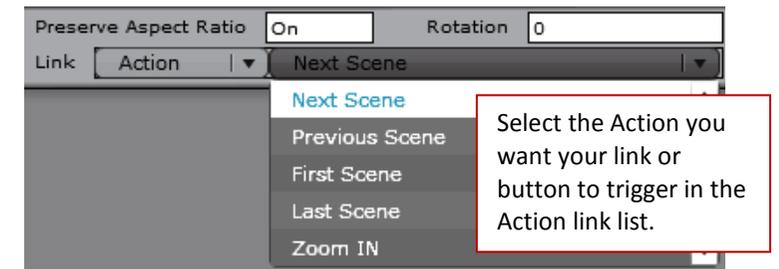
Create a Text link

1. Mark some text inside a text box...then click the Link field in the *text properties* panel (the place where you find fonts etc.).
2. Now it's the same drill as for images described above.

11. Create Customized Navigation Buttons

If you want to create your own customized buttons (or text links) as replacements for the buttons for Next Scene, Full Screen, Share, Mute placed in the default menu in the right hand corner then this is easily done in a similar way as linking to scenes.

1. Place your own button icons anywhere you want in the Foreground layer (see how you work with Layers in section 8)
2. Select the button you want to make interactive.
3. Select an Action in the Link settings. In the drop down list you choose amongst the available actions.



Example space w. customized
Next & Prev Scenes buttons
<http://www.dac.dk/MYB/mybweb.html>

12. Placing Items in the Front Layer Correctly

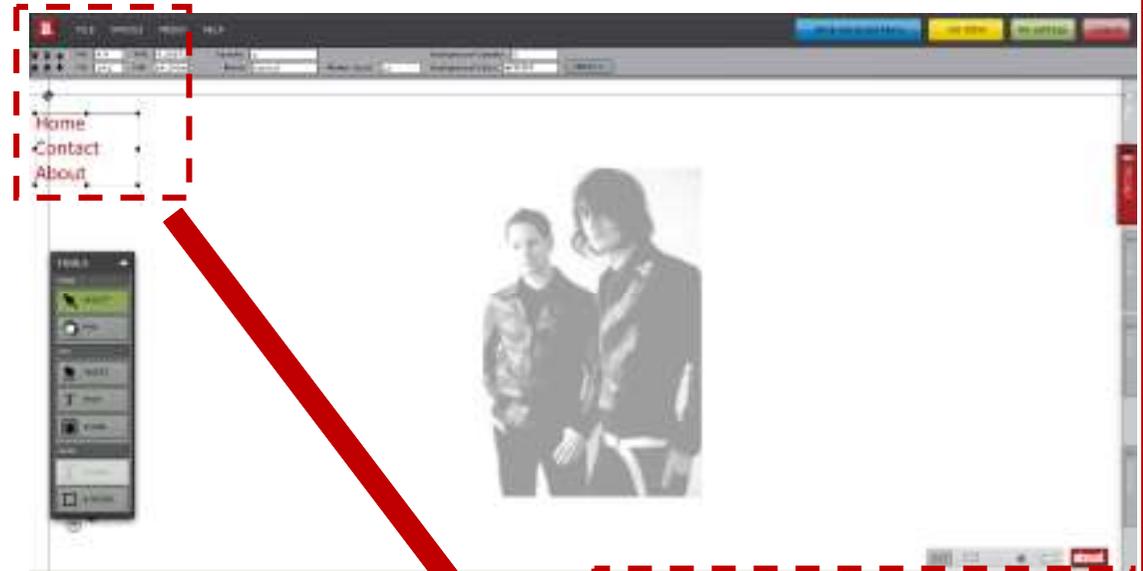
To ensure that the items that you place in the Front layer and Back layer are always placed and sized correctly no matter browser size and proportions, you should use the **Registration Point** (red arrow below) which is available on all items.



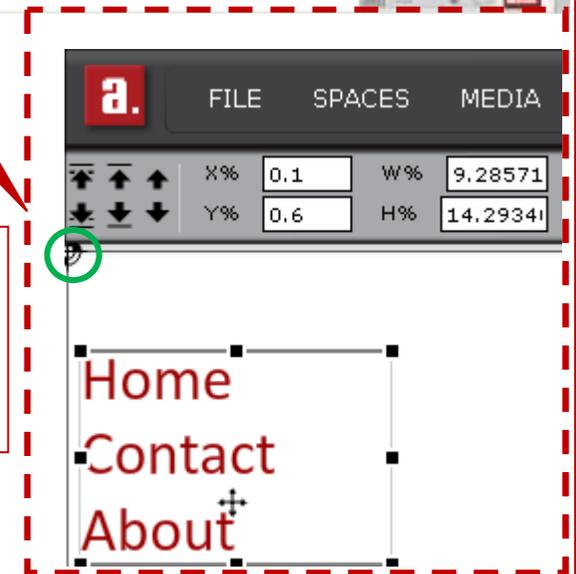
By placing the registration point on the nearest side or corner of your space you lock the menu's (or item's) placement relative to the point where you place the registration point.

This way you ensure that your navigation menu is always correctly placed no matter the size and proportion of the browser window the viewer uses when opening the space. This is especially important when your space is shown as a small embed on an html web site.

Try to experiment with this functionality by placing the registration point of an item placed in the Front layer different places and then try to resize your browser window.



Move the Registration point (green circle) of your menu to the nearest corner or side of the space. This way it will always be placed and sized correctly no matter browser window, embed sizes, and proportions.



13. Configure the Default Button Menu

You can easily hide and show all the buttons and background you see in the bottom toolbar. (Pro clients don't see the Ahead logo).

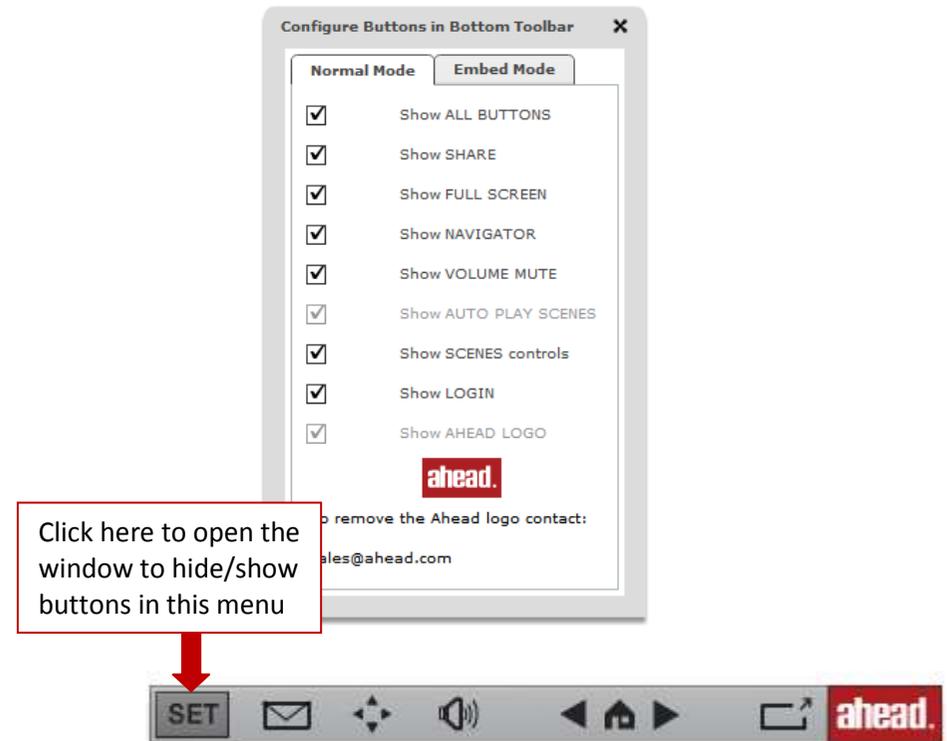
Note that that you can configure the menu for both the normal space and when it is embedded on fx. a web page or Facebook.

Pro Plan Users – Only

It's also here that the Pro Plan users can remove the Ahead logo in order to white label their solution.

The 'Powered by Ahead' graphics that show when the spaces load is automatically removed when upgrading to the Pro Plan.

Contact Ahead for more information: support@ahead.com



14. Texts & SWFs - Performance vs Quality

If you have a lot of text and vector graphics content like Flash/SWFs/Illustrator/SVGs in your space this may decrease the smoothness you experience when zooming and panning – especially on low-end computers and mobile devices with no graphics card.

To optimize the smoothness of the pan & zoom you can use the setting “Motion Quality” which is available when selecting a text or SWF-file which are vector graphics.

LOW Motion Quality (default) = make the navigation smoother but the display quality of the text/SWF will degrade* while you pan & zoom.

When you stop pan & zoom the item will return to high quality.

HIGH Motion Quality = content will display as super sharp vector graphics while you zoom & pan, but you may experience a more choppy zoom feel if there are a lot of items, very complex vector graphics and long texts**.

* The Vector graphics are transformed into Bit map images while you zoom and pan for lower CPU requirements. They are transformed back to vector when you stop zooming and panning.

** This occurs because vector graphics require a lot of processing power in order to display properly.



15. Video & Audio

Sprite up your spaces by using video. You can use FLV (recommended) and Mov files. Check out the Supported file formats section for more detail.

To improve the user experience and performance when you use Video or Audio in your space you can use the special settings 'Loop' & 'Playmode Onscreen' & 'Playmode OFFscreen'.

It takes less computing power if a video is not playing while it's not showing on screen. This way you can fx. choose if the audio and video should:

- stop playing when it is not shown on screen
- start to play when the space loads or it shows in a scene
- Have music playing continuously in your space

There's a range of combinations. Consult the table below for more guidance.



Note! Stop/Restart playback actions override Resume/Pause actions.

*The identical shaded cells indicate identical end-results no matter the combination of settings.

Playmodes		ONscreen Settings			
		No Action	Autoplay	Restart	Resume
OFFscreen Settings	No Action	Nothing happens unless you click the item to play it. It continues to play until you stop/pause it manually.	The media automatically starts playing when the space loads if it's placed in the first scene. If it's not shown on load it will start to play when shown onscreen. It continues to play hereafter.	The media only starts playing when actively clicked and will continue playing OFFscreen. When back on screen it automatically restarts.	The media only starts playing when actively clicked and continues playing OFFscreen.-When back on screen it just continues playing.
	Pause	When media is OFFscreen it automatically pauses. When back on screen you have to manually click it to resume.	When media is OFFscreen it automatically pauses. When back on screen it automatically resumes playing from where it stopped.*	When media is OFFscreen it automatically STOPS. When back on screen it automatically restarts from the beginning.*	When media is OFFscreen it automatically pauses. When back on screen it automatically resumes playing from where it stopped.*
	Stop	When media is OFFscreen it automatically stops playback. When back on screen you have to manually click to restart.	When media is OFFscreen it automatically STOPS. When back on screen it automatically restarts from the beginning.*	When media is OFFscreen it automatically STOPS. When back on screen it automatically restarts from the beginning.*	When media is OFFscreen it automatically STOPS. When back on screen it automatically restarts from the beginning.*

16. Born Viral - Share & Embed Your Space

You can easily promote and distribute your spaces to almost any online channel you wish via the Share Icon (envelope) at the bottom of the screen.

1. **Post to Facebook:** Post the space to the main social networks and publishing sites like Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress.
2. **Bookmark a space on Digg, Del.icio.us etc.**
3. **Email your space to your friends**
4. **Embed your space directly on your web site (learn more on next page)**
5. **Link directly to your space from your website, newsletter or blog**

The Share Window

SHARE THIS SPACE WITH THE WORLD! X

1 Post 2 Bookmark 3 Email

4 Embed code: Copy

```
<object classid="clsid:D27CDB6E-AE6D-11cf-96B8-444553540000"
codebase="http://download.macromedia.com/pub/shockwave/cabs/flash/
```

5 The link to this space. Copy

http://ahead.com/dZOv1g36er4QBWqeaw8Zjf/b0fGuO36ir

SET [Share Icon] [Volume] [Home] [Back] [Forward] ahead.

The Share Button

Embed your space on your web site

Use the 'Embed code' (green box to the right on previous page) to embed and publish your space live on your HTML web site or blog.

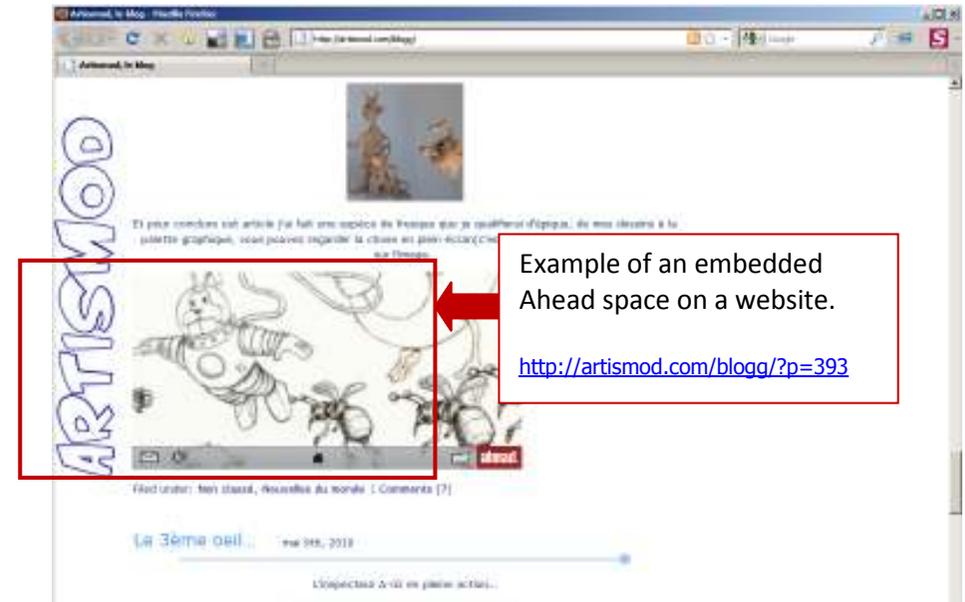
Copy the code snippet from the Share window and paste it into the HTML code of your own web site.

Change the height and width in the embed code to decide the size of the embed to display on your site – see the colored areas (It's important to change the size both places in order to work properly in all browsers).

Don't be scared of the many code lines code. Just make sure to copy and paste all of it and it'll work great.

Code snippet Example

```
<object classid="clsid:D27CDB6E-AE6D-11cf-96B8-
444553540000"
codebase="http://download.macromedia.com/pub/shockwave/cabs/flash/swflash.ca
b#version=10,0,22,87" width="500" height="250" id="Ahead"><param name="src"
value="http://embed.ahead.com/cwsUUYy41r47Lnqeal7e6Z"/><param
name="quality" value="high"/><param name="bgcolor" value="0x000000"/><param
name="allowFullScreen" value="true"/><param name="flashVars"
value="crtr=1&gig_lt=1276095328140&gig_pt=1276096013562&gig_g=3&gig_s=artis
mod.com&gig_crtr=1"/><param name="allowScriptAccess" value="always"/><embed
src="http://embed.ahead.com/cwsUUYy41r47Lnqeal7e6Z" quality="high"
bgcolor="0x000000" width="500" height="250" name="Ahead"
flashvars="crtr=1&gig_lt=1276095328140&gig_pt=1276096013562&gig_g=3&gig_s=a
rtismod.com&gig_crtr=1" align="" allowfullscreen="true" allowscriptaccess="always"
type="application/x-shockwave-flash"
pluginspace="http://www.macromedia.com/go/getflashplayer"></embed></object>
```



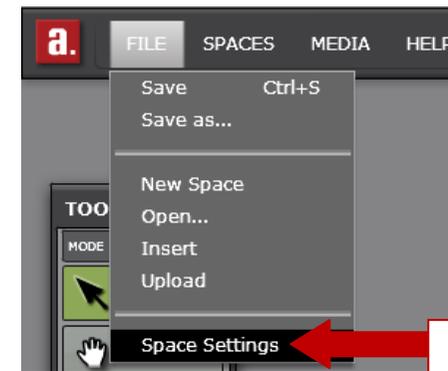
17. Search Engine Friendly

Normally Flash based web sites and content isn't indexed properly by the major search engines like Google and Bing.

But with Ahead all your public spaces are indexed as there's an HTML page lying behind each space, which the search engines index like any other ordinary web site.

To optimize your search ranking you should:

- 1) Name your space with a name that indicates what your space is all about
- 2) Make your space's URL indicate what your space is all about (**Pro & Basic users only**)
- 3) Write a proper description of what your content contains
- 4) Make sure that the text you use in the space uses many of the key words you think people will use when searching for content like yours. If you don't write text in your space, and if your file names aren't descriptive the content your space will get a low search ranking.
- 5) To get a higher search engine ranking encourage other people to link to your space, embed it on their own sites, tweet about it, publish it on their facebook profile etc.
- 6) If you don't want your space to show up in the search engine results go to the advanced space settings where you can turn Search indexing off.



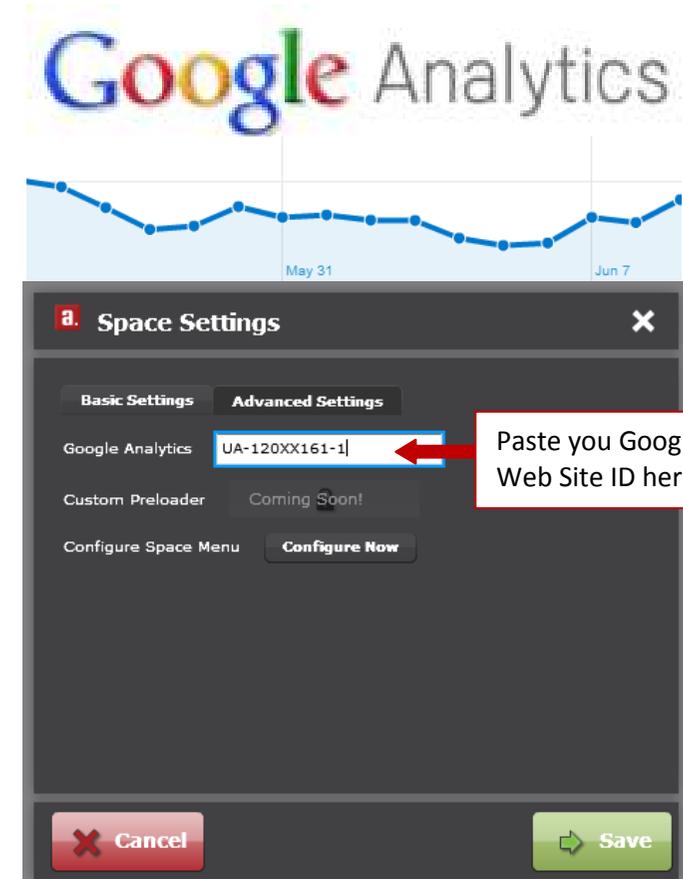
To edit the settings open Space Settings in the File drop down list

18. Google Analytics – Pro Plan Users Only

If you're subscribing to the Pro plan you can track the user traffic to your spaces with the free and powerful Google Analytics traffic and statistic software.

1. Sign up to Google Analytics www.google.com/analytics. For each Ahead space that you want to track, create a new web site profile in Google Analytics. Each space will get its own unique Google Analytics website ID (eg UA-120XX161-1).
2. In your Ahead Editor open the space you want to track. In the FILE drop down list open the Space Settings, and type in the Google Analytics website ID for that space.
3. Press Save settings
4. Save your space
5. When logging in to Google Analytics you can now get detailed stats on your visitors and traffic.

Note: It takes up to 24 hrs before Google Analytics starts displaying your stats after you've added the Google Analytics web site ID, but the data collections starts immediately.



19. Right Click / Context Menu

If you right click on an item you get the context menu, with a range of options and short cuts.

Also note the Download Original file option, which makes your space a great way of storing files for sharing.



20. Keyboard Short Cuts

Edit Mode

- PAN: Space + Mouse click & drag
 - Zoom: Page Up / Down keys or Ctr +/-
 - Save: Ctr+S
 - Jump from Scene to Scene: Arrow left/Right key
 - Undo: Ctr+Z / Redo: Ctr+Y
 - Move Item to Front/Back: Ctr+Arrow Up / Ctr+Arrow Down
 - Hide & Lock Scenes: F2 (only PC)
-
- Copy: Ctr+C
 - Paste: Ctr+V
-
- Group Items: Ctr+G
 - Ungroup: Ctr+Shift+G
-
- F6 = Go to Foreground Tier
 - F7 = Go to Scenes Tier
 - F8 = Go to Zoom Tier
 - F9 = Go to Background Tier
 - F12 = Hide the edit UI in Edit Mode
-
- CTR + Scroll = Rotate canvas/space
 - Shift + Rotate Item = Rotation jumps in incremental steps of 5 degrees
 - Shift + Scale Item=Change proportions of item



View Mode

- Zoom in: Shift+Mouse click | Page Up key | Ctr+ + (*plus key*)
 - Zoom out: Ctr+Mouse click or Page Down key | Ctr+ - (*minus key*)
-
- Select Text: Shift+Click on text field
 - Jump from Scene to Scene: Arrow left/Right key
-
- Rotate canvas/space = CTR + Scroll

21. File formats supported

You can display almost any file format in your Ahead space. Below is a list of supported formats. All other formats are displayed as file icons.

Don't think about image size as we take care of that for you, but we do recommend **max 100 MB** files as your browser may die on you while trying to upload (this however depends on your hardware horse power and bandwidth of course)

Supported file formats:

Image / Vector formats

- **PNG** (recommended for best performance if using bitmaps)
- **JPG**
- **TIFF**
- **GIF** (not animated)
- **BMP**
- **SWF – static & interactive** (Important!: Make sure to set the “Clip the Artboard to Size” to YES if exporting from Illustrator)
- **Photoshop** (RGB mode only, hidden layers may show!)
- **Illustrator** (in beta - not fully stable. We recommend exporting the file as a SWF instead. Important!: Make sure to set the “Clip the Artboard to Size” to YES when exporting)
- **EPS** (in beta - not fully stable. For best performance save the file as a PNG instead)

Document formats

- **PDF**
(only if non-password protected)
- **Word**
- **Excel**
- **Powerpoint**
(animations will not work)
- **Open Office Files**

Audio & Video formats

- **MP3**
- **Video** (codecs: H.264, sound AAC)
 - **FLV & F4v & M4V** (recommended for faster streaming)
 - Quick Time .MOV (may not stream properly)

All other file formats will be displayed as file icons in your space.

How to show a YouTube Video

We do not yet support direct playback of YouTube videos, but we recommend that you use <http://www.savevid.com/> for downloading a YouTube video to your computer as an FLV file. You can then directly upload it to your My Media list and insert it in your space.

22. Change Password and Personal Info

Click the Settings button in the top menu to change your name, email and password.

23. Tips & Tricks

- **Save Often.** Ahead does not auto save your work. Hence we recommend that you save often and / or save copies of your space.
- **Space Sizes:** Don' create spaces that are bigger than 400.000x400.000 px as you may experience some items behave weird when they get very big. If you do experience strange behavior then try to scale down your items, and it should fix your problem in most cases.
- **Cut Up Large Background Images:** If you plan to add a large image as a backdrop in your presentation, we recommend that you cut up the image into smaller pieces before uploading it and then put it back together like a puzzle in Ahead. This way you will reduce the risk of the background disappearing when you zoom very close in.
- **Rotation:** If you move the registration point of an item, then you can rotate the item "around" the registration point.



24. Get your Own URL and Branding – Pro License

If you wish to use Ahead professionally and need your own URL to point to own of your spaces and want to brand your space(s) without the Ahead logo branding, more storage/traffic please contact us at support@ahead.com

Our prices are very fair – especially for our Beta Users.

If you have a do-gooder project, want to use it for student projects, or just something truly unique and non-commercial then we'll probably give you a free license 😊.

Thank you very much for your help and have fun.

The Ahead Team
support@ahead.com